

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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In These Pages

	Page
Kyodan Christian Education Study, Conference	1
Annual Kyodan-Related Missionary Meet	2
Centenary of the Nippon Seikokai in Japan	4

Kyodan Christian Education Study, Conference

In March, 1956, a study of Christian education in Japan was inaugurated by the Kyodan (Group Number 3: Kyodan Study Group--The Church and Education.) In October, 1956, its conclusions were published in book form, "Obstacles to Christian Education." Boldly asking, what are the obstacles to Christian education in Japan, it centered its inquiry on "Obstacles in Theology", "Obstacles in Church Practice", "Obstacles in the Social Structure of Japan", and "Obstacles in the Japanese Mentality."

The study group, meeting at intervals and working through individual and committee study, brought one basic recommendation: an educational method suitable for Japan in its present situation must be devised, i.e. the Japanese church must provide an indigenous program of Christian education.

Among its findings were: The Japanese church has been over-dependent on imported theology, especially in its extreme forms (Barthianism, pentacostal or eschatological extremism, or existential theology with over-emphasis on the here and now.) In church practice, the greatest need is for a serious consideration of the "theology of the incarnation," that is, in organization and administration, in preparation of the curriculum, and in community service. The local church must act and work seriously. Some obstacles in the social structure arise from the imperial-social system, which is reflected also in the family system and in

the landlord-tenant system in farming. The poverty of the lower classes as well as backwardness of small businesses, especially as related to the "web-society", which makes free movement or decision difficult, was recognized as another important factor. Thus, the lack of individuality or "non-existentiality" becomes a prime obstacle to evangelism.

It was felt that on the part of Christian leaders and those who prepare Christian education material, there existed a lack of study of adequate content as well as a lack of adequate understanding or sensitivity toward the students in the church schools. Also recognized was the negative attitude of Japanese homes toward Christian education, among both Christian and non-Christians.

To consider these findings, the Kyodan Committee on Christian Education called a Conference of Christian Schools (April 7-8, meeting in Hakone). Prominent educators took part: Kazuo Kitamori, professor, Tokyo United Theological Seminary; Kiyomi Morioka, associate professor, Tokyo University of Education; Makoto Tsumori, associate professor, Ochanomizu University; Kikuo Yamaoka, associate professor, Chiba University; Koichi Kobayashi, professor, Aoyama University; Yoshiaki Iizaka, associate professor, Peers' School; in addition to members of the committee.

The conference centered on eight topics; Strengthening the fellowship between teachers and students, with a Christian concern for a human relationship, might perhaps call for the technique of the church's house-meetings as an educational method. To strengthen the church school department it is not adequate to discuss organization and curriculum; not technique but spiritual concern must be basic. One difficult area of evangelism among students is among "middle-school" students (grades 7-9; ages 12-15), so that more effort and concern must be directed here.

Among teacher problems, it was noted that often the superintendent of the church school is one in name only, sometimes an elder or respected person but one lacking knowledge of educational procedure and who is not directly involved in basic teaching so that he lacks appreciation for continuing problems. On the pastor's part, it was urged that there is a failure to see Christian education as part of the church's evangelism, and often the pastor, himself, lacks knowledge of Christian educational methods. Thus, in criticism of present theological education in Japan, it was felt that the priority given to theology in the curriculum permits little room for practical theology. Thus, re-consideration of the theological curriculum is necessary. Christian schools and the local churches must find ways for a more intimate relationship in their mutual task. The church then, was urged to strengthen generally its educational attitude and practice.

Annual Kyodan-Related Missionary Meet

Under the leadership of Dr. Darley Downs, the annual Kyodan-related missionary conference was held from March 31 to April 3 at Sanmaiso, Hakone. Celebrating the centennial of the Protestant Christian mission in Japan, the theme was "Review and Prospect". In the opening meeting, the Rev. Keikichi Shirai, moderator, United Church of Christ in Japan, brought greetings. Dr. Masao Takenaka, Doshisha Theological Seminary, concentrated on the Okayama district in his address, "Social Action and Thinking in Japan: Review and Prospect." Noting that awareness of

social needs in Japan were present in the earliest Christian congregations, who responded especially to the need for women's schools and for medical care, he emphasized that these were not imported views but were spontaneously generated by the work of the Gospel among the Japanese who took its meaning seriously. The first evening closed with a panel discussion, surveying Christian social work, led by the Rev. Everett Thompson.

In a main address the veteran missionary, the Rev. Frank Cary, brought a unique perspective for viewing the first fifty years of work in Japan under the title, "Right Dress! Forward March!" With quotations from early letters and writings, he emphasized the idea that past missionaries who were adequate to their calling were those who were aligned with Jesus Christ, with whom we must all, continuously, "right dress"--and then we are able to "forward march." Dr. Richard Drummond deepened this historical perspective by a study of martyrdoms among Roman Catholic Christians as well as of the suffering of the faithful among Protestants, speaking of "The Cost of Discipleship in Japan." Among the fruits of this discipleship he noted the elevated status of women, wide-spread Christian schools, and medical aid for lepers, and concern for the blind and the deaf.

With this background, addresses on "Beginning the Second Century" were given in four areas: general evangelism (E. Frank Carey); occupational evangelism (Theodor Jaeckel); youth and student work (Rendell Davis); and schools (Darley Downs).

The final addresses were given by two visitors, Dr. Walter Marshall Horton, Oberlin Graduate School of Theology and at present a visiting lecturer in Doshisha University; and Dr. Tracey Jones, Secretary for Southeast Asia, Division of World Missions of the Methodist Church, "Current Situation in Mainland China."

A music program -- traditional church music, Japanese folk songs, and Negro spirituals -- was presented by a 30-member choir from the International Christian University, led by Mr. Michio Suzuki. Many intrinsically valuable writings and photographs, illustrating the first century of the Christian mission in Japan, were gathered and displayed by Louise Auchenbach. The communion service, which closed the conference, was presided over by the Rev. Mr. Philip Williams and the Rev. Mrs. Philip Williams, with music and choir under the direction of Mr. William Cundiff.

In business sessions, two important questions were raised, both resulting from earlier discussions or addresses in the main meeting. In a defense of the quality of institutions of higher education related to the Christian churches, it was urged that no investigating board composed of foreign members come to Japan for a survey but that any such survey be done within and under the auspices of the Education Association of Christian Schools. Secondly, it was felt that in keeping with the recognized autonomy of the Kyodan in respect to mission boards that precise apportionment of funds should be made in Japan rather than before being sent to Japan.

In another action, participated in individually by signature, many witnessed to their agreement in principal with the statement on mainland

China as issued by the Cleveland meeting of the National Council of Churches, U. S. A.

Present at the conference were a total of 320 Kyodan-related and interested missionaries, with a record-breaking number of 76 children.

Centenary of the Nippon Seikokai in Japan

Worship and international fellowship keynoted the Japan Centennial Celebrations in Tokyo, April 7, 8 and 9. Some 60 foreign representatives from eleven countries joined the Japanese in the festival, the largest Anglican delegations coming from the United States, England, Canada and Australia -- countries whose missionary societies have undertaken work in Japan. Indeed, the Centenary was held to commemorate the start, in 1859, of mission work by the mother Churches, not the founding the Nippon Seikokai, the commemoration which will be in 1987.

Foreign prelates who were the guests of the Nippon Seikokai were the Most Reverend and Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Francis Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury and Mrs. Fisher; The Most Rev. Arthur Carl Lichtenberger, Presiding Bishop of the American Church, The Most Rev. Reginald Charles Halse, Archbishop of Brisbane and Acting Primate of Australia; The Rt. Rev. Francis Eric Irving Bloy, Bishop of Los Angeles, and Mrs. Bloy; The Rt. Rev. John Charles Sydney Daly, Bishop of Korea; The Rt. Rev. Harry Sherbourne Kennedy, Bishop of Honolulu; The Rt. Rev. Reginald Mallett, Bishop of Northern Indiana, and Mrs. Mallett; and the Rt. Rev. Ivor Arthur Norris, Bishop of Brandon and representatives of the Primate of all Canada and Mrs. Norris. Representatives of two missionary societies also were on hand. The Rev. Canon A. H. Davis of Canada, and the Rev. Frank Coaldrake (himself a former Japan missionary) of Australia.

American laymen were represented by the Hon. Francis B. Sayre; and American Churchwomen by Mrs. Arthur N. Sherman, Executive Secretary of the Division of Women's Work and by Mrs. Ellsworth Ferreira of the G.F.S.

Japanese priests working overseas who returned home to see how their fellow Churchmen were doing included the Rev. John M. Yamazaki of Los Angeles, and the Rev. and Mrs. Ken Imai of Toronto, Canada.

The Japanese Church also welcomed back a number of their former missionaries: Miss Etta Anbler (Richmond, Va.), Miss Elizabeth Dickson (Carthage, N.Y.), The Rev. R.W. Andrews Gardiner (San Francisco, Calif.), The Rev. Kenneth Sansbury (St. Augustine College, Canterbury, England), Miss Nellie McKim (San Francisco, Calif.), and Dr. Richard K. Start (Brantford, Ont., Canada).

The Centenary formally opened the afternoon of April 7 in Tokyo's Municipal Auditorium which over-night had been made as cathedral-like as possible. (The previous day it had been used to celebrate Buddha's Birthday!) A procession of 250 clergy and laity was witnessed by 4,500 people, the largest assemblage of Anglicans ever in Japan. Prayers and Scripture readings were offered by three Japanese bishops, after which Bishop Lichtenberger preached the sermon. In his congregation the Bishop had Prince Takamatsu, brother of the Emperor.

On April 8, at 9:00 a.m., also in the Municipal Auditorium a Commun-

on Service of Thanksgiving was held, the celebrant being Japan's Presiding Bishop, Michael H. Yashiro, and the sermoner the Archbishop of Canterbury. Later in the morning at St. Paul's University the new College of Law was inaugurated. In the afternoon at the Auditorium Bishop Yashiro gave an address, 'Reflections on One Hundred Years of the Nippon Seikokai', in which he paid special tribute to the missionaries who established the Anglican Church in Japan. In the evening the scene shifted to Tucker Hall, at St. Paul's University, where a panel discussion, moderated by the Rev. Samuel Koji Horie, Chairman of the Department of Christian Education, 'Looking Ahead to the Next Hundred Years' tackled the problem of future Church strategy.

On the morning of April 9 Centenary visitors proceeded to Tucker Hall, at St. Paul's University, to witness University President Masatoshi Matsushita confer honorary Doctorates of Laws on Archbishop Fisher and Bishop Lichtenberger, both of whom addressed the gathering. The ceremony was followed by a luncheon reception in the University Refectory. Early in the afternoon guests hurried away from St. Paul's through the rain to reception at St. Luke's International Hospital in downtown Tokyo. The evening saw nearly everybody back at St. Paul's Tucker Hall, all of its 500 seats full of Episcopalians enjoying a four-hour variety entertainment of songs, vaudeville acts, and folk dances staged by representatives of the ten dioceses of the Nippon Seikokai.

At the end of the afternoon session the leaders of the Mother Churches met together informally and the next morning, April 9, published the following letter:

To the Presiding Bishop, Nippon Seikokai:

My Dear Bishop Yashiro,

We rejoice and give thanks that we are privileged to join with you and your people in the celebration of one hundred years of our Church's mission to the people of Japan. The glorious example of the past century makes us the more aware of the opportunities before you now.

As the Nippon Seikokai enters upon the second century of work among the millions of people in this richly endowed nation, we assure you of our renewed concern for the mission of our Church here.

The task is of the greatest magnitude. Therefore, for the strengthening of the existing Church and the initiation of new work, we pledge ourselves to consult and work together with you, in the future as in the past, as partners and brothers in Church.

In our Christian exchange of thought, and gifts, and prayers, we shall seek to uphold you in doing God's will and work in this land.

(Signed) Geoffrey Cantuar:
Reginald Brishane:
Ivor Brandon.
Arthur Lichtenberger

Anglicans Get Honorary Degrees from St. Paul's (Rikkyo) University.

St. Paul's University, the Church's largest (10,000 students) school in Japan, continued its custom of granting honorary degrees to non-Japanese who have made outstanding contributions to the Church; and, as its share in the Centenary, conferred degrees on three Americans and an Englishman.

On March 25, on the occasion of the Commencement Exercises and in the presence of 1,400 young men and women graduates, University President Matsushita conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws on the Hon. Francis Vowes Sayre who delivered the main address of the day. In fact, Dr. Sayre made his address twice that day, for the size of Tucker Hall Auditorium (1,500 seats) can not accommodate all the graduates and their guests at the same time.) Dr. Sayre was cited for his efforts in promoting laymen's work and for his many services to St. Paul's, both during and since his year (1952-53) in Japan as Bishop Sherrill's special representative. Dr. Sayre now is chairman of the American Committee of the Friends of Rikkyo.

On April 6, at an Evensong Service in the University's All Saints Chapel, Mrs. Arthur Sherman received at the hands of Dr. Matsushita the honorary degree of Doctor of Humanities, her second such honor (the first being Doctor of Humane Letters from Hobart and William Smith Colleges in 1955.) After the ceremony a newly completed movie on St. Paul's was reviewed, and the guests attended a reception in Mrs. Sherman's honor in Chapel House.

Finally, on the morning of April 9, at Tucker Hall, in the presence of several hundred guests, including former Prime Minister Yoshida, President Matsushita conferred honorary doctors of Laws on the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Presiding Bishop of the American Church. Both Dr. Sher and Dr. Lichtenberger made addresses on the occasion, after which they and the guests attended a luncheon reception on the campus.

Japan Church's 26th General Synod Meets

Usually the Triennial Synod of the Nippon Seikokai creates almost as much stir -- albeit a proportionately smaller one -- as the American General Convention; but its meeting this year was overshadowed by the festivities accompanying the Centenary. In fact most of the foreign visitors never even realized that the Synod was meeting and thus were prived of a chance to see Synod was meeting and thus were deprived of chance to see Japanese Churchmen in their routine working clothes. What work they did, even though accomplishments appear at first glance to be slight.

An interesting proposal -- and none the less interesting because it was defeated -- was made by the Committee on Evangelism to reduce the number of dioceses from ten to eight, distributing parts of two of the present among their neighboring four dioceses, and to designate three of the remaining dioceses as 'mission dioceses'. Despite the reasonableness, particularly its financial attractiveness, of this proposal it was, after long debate, eliminated. Delegates felt that a reduction of dioceses would be a retrograde step; that the proposal, under the Canons, had been brought forth by the improper committee; and that there was a sad lack of clarity in the term 'mission diocese'.

A positive action and of course, the most significant one of the Synod was the acceptance by the Church of the 'new' Prayer Book. The Synod of 1956 adopted this Book for permissive and optional use throughout the Church -- now it becomes the Orator Book of the Nippon Seikokai.

Panel Discussion

On the evening of April 8, a "panel discussion" was held in Tucker Hall, St. Paul's University. The subject of the panel was "Looking Ahead to the Next Hundred Years". The Rev. Wm. Enkichi Kan, Chairman of the Faculties of Arts and Letters at St. Paul's, and The Rev. Cyril Powles, Professor of the Central Theological College, were introductory speakers. They spoke, respectively, of "the contribution of the Seikokai to the Anglican Communion", and "the responsibility of the Church o Society".

There were seven other members on the panel, four of whom represented the Church's organizations for young people, the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, The Girls' Friendly Society and the "Seinen-kai"; the remaining three members were Prof. Ushijima of the Faculty of Education, Kyushu University, Mr. Waki, Editor of The Christ Weekly, and the Rev. Mr. Furuki, one of the younger clergy.

Discussion centered mainly around the problem of presenting the Gospel in the language of the people, and in a way to meet their particular needs, without in any sense "watering down" or compromising the gospel's meaning. Over a thousand people attended and unusual interest was displayed in the discussion. After the panel had spoken briefly to the points raised in the introductory speeches, contributions were invited from the audience; there was unfortunately no time to hear more than a "sampling" of the many who seemed eager to speak.

